

REMARKS

Claims 2-17 are currently pending in the present patent application, with claims 1 and 18-24 having been cancelled through the above claim amendments.

In an Office Action mailed 7 April 2006, the Examiner allowed claims 5-8 and 10-14 but maintained his rejections of claims 1-4, 9, and 15-24 over the previously cited references. More specifically, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,198,008 to Thomas ("Thomas"). Claims 2-4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Thomas and further in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2004/0017962 A1 to Lee *et al.* ("Lee"), U.S. Patent No. 5,673,284 to Congdon *et al.* ("Congdon"), and what would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art, respectively. The Examiner also rejected claims 15-24 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 3,992,079 to Giallorenzi in view of U.S. Patent Nos. 3,948,583 and 5,124,543 to Kawashima.

Through the above claim amendments, all pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Claim 15 has been amended to recite a structure that is allowable for reasons similar to those for claims 5 and 10. Dependent claims 16 and 17 are allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 15 and due to the additional limitations added by each of these claims.

Although claims 1 and 18-24 have been cancelled, the undersigned would like on behalf of the applicant to expressly indicate in the record that these claims are nonetheless considered patentable over the prior art of record for at least the reasons set forth in our prior amendment filed on 28 February 2006. These claims have been cancelled merely to expedite issuance of the present application and identical claims may be pursued in a continuation application. The same is true of the subject matter covered by claim 15 as submitted in the amendment of 28 February 2006.

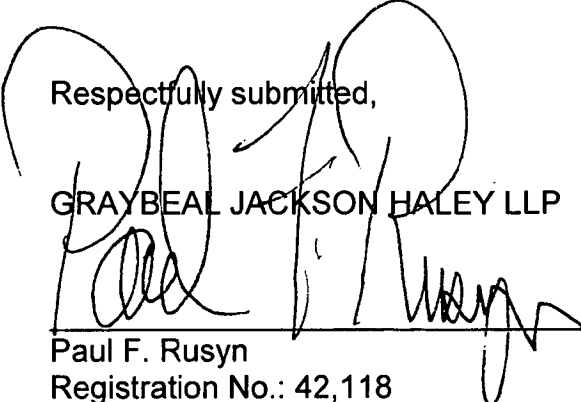
The present patent application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and a Notice of Allowance are respectfully requested. Please charge any additional fees or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 19-

0130. Should the Examiner have any further questions about the application, Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to contact the undersigned attorney at (425) 455-5575 to resolve the matter.

DATED this 7th day of July, 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

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